45

INDULGENCE

TO

Tender Consciences

Shewn to be

MOST REASONABLE

AND

CHRISTIAN.

By a Minister of the Church of England.

With Allowance.

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8.

Indulgence to Tender Conſciences, ſhewn to be moſt Reaſonable and Chriſtian.

SIR,

I Preſume your Deſign in deſiring my Thoughts in the Caſe of an *Indulgence*, Comprehenſive of all ſuch, however otherwiſe differing in their Sentiments in Religion, yet being Peaceable and Pious, for their Reſcue from the rigorous Demands of Penal Laws, is not ſo much to know my Opinion (it being inconſiſtent with the Modeſty and Submiſſion of a Subject, to Dogmatize in a Caſe wherein His Gracious Majeſty hath been pleas'd to give His Pious Reſolution) as to underſtand the Arguments which have influenc'd me, and poſſibly many others, into a tenderneſs for Men in that Caſe; which briefly are,

I. The Tendency that ſuch *Indulgence* hath, and the Service that it will effectually do, to the Conſervation of the National Peace. Upon which it is, that thoſe Princes and States that have Experienc'd the Deficiency of other and contrary Methods, have betaken themſelves to this, and have found, that where it hath been Candidly Granted, it rarely Diſturb'd, and always Preſerv'd the Public Peace. This is believ'd to be the Support of the Governments in *Poland* and *Holland*; the laſt of which, by once departing from this Method, and by Exerciſing Rigor upon one Diſſenting Party, inflam'd their State into ſuch a Paroxiſm, as threatned its utter Ruin: Whereas an equal admittance of differing Parties into the Graces and Favors of the Government, will Command an univerſal Calm and Compoſure in the Minds of all; which in neceſſary Conſequence will

II. Give great Advantage and Encouragement to Trade, which muſt unavoidably ſuffer Decay, by making Men Sullen,

Careleſs, or Deſperate, in denying them the Liberty of their Conſciences. It can't but diſeaſe the Minds of Men, to ſee others advanc'd to Dignities and Preferments, of which they muſt deſpair, not becauſe they are leſs capable or worthy, but becauſe they bear a good Conſcience, and can't for any Temporal Advantage hazard their Eternal Peace. Thoſe Laws that render Subjects incapable of Offices and Places of Profit, beget in their Minds an implacable Averſion towards the Government. And 'tis idle to think, that when they have opportunity, they will not make Returns proportionable to the Severities they have been Exercis'd with, and from that Self-love which is eſſential to Human Nature, will not Conſult the Ruin of that Government, which excludes them from the Comforts and Accommodations of Life, and in ſome Caſes, from a poſſibility of getting Bread. And on the other hand 'tis moſt obvious, that a Princes indulgent owning all his Subjects, and taking them under the Covert and Protection of his Royal Wing, will oblige their Agreement in a United Strength, to Support the Government againſt all Adverſaries whatſoever. To theſe may be added

III. That the rigorous Execution of Penal Laws is fartheſt from effecting the Allay of Animoſities, and the Healing of Diviſions; for Men will not be frighted nor aw'd out of their Opinions: Inſtead of this, it rather inflames the Wounds, and renders the Breaches utterly incurable. I can't think, that upon a bold and univerſal Challenge, one Inſtance can be produc'd of one Convert that hathbeen made by theſe Methods.

Notwithſtanding all this, and much more muſt be acknowledg'd true by ſuch as have not loſt their Memories, and have made any Obſervation of the State of Affairs in theſe late Years, in our Engliſh World; yet I am aware, that if ſuch Indulgence can be charg'd with Iniquity, or cenſur'd as doing or permitting of Evil that Good may come of it; that upon that Maxim of *Fiat Juſtitia*, &c. the whole ſtrength of this Argument will be enervated. 'Tis therefore a juſt and neceſſary Service to this Caſe, to take off all Pretences to ſuch an Imputation; which may readily be done, Firſt, by conſidering

ſidering the Practice of the Jewiſh and of the Chriſtian Church; and Secondly, by applying our ſelves to the proper Meaſures of Good and Evil. 'Tis evident, that in the Jewiſh Oeconomy the *Sadducees*, notwithſtanding their groſs Opinions, and the bad Conſequences of them, were not excluded the Offices of Truſt and Dignity in their Church and State; *Acts* 5. 17. And we do not find that our Bleſſed Saviour charg'd ſuch extending their Favors to them as a Crime; and in dealing with them concerning their bad Opinions, doth not Proſecute them with Severities and hard Words, but calmly refutes their Errors, as being founded on their ignorance of the Scriptures and the Power of God. This ſhould be Inſtruction to us, to treat one another with Temper and Moderation.

'Tis evident that Chriſtian Churches both at Home and Abroad, decline the giving of any peremptory Declaration in the *Dort* Controverſies, but allow their Preferments to either of thoſe contending Parties; by which they are ſo far from Deſtroying, that they Support and Adorn their Churches. I find in a late Letter, written by a Learned Pen from *Zurich*, that which is ſtyl'd a ſad Inſtance of Anger and Heat among Divines in Matters of ſmall Conſequence, upon a middle Way that *Amirald*, *Daille*, &c. took in thoſe Matters that were Diſputed in *Holland*; upon which thoſe that adher'd ſtrictly to the oppoſit Doctrin were inflam'd, and the Contention grew to that height, that almoſt the whole Town came to be concern'd: In which the Author of the Letter ſaith, the Magiſtrates had acted wiſely, to have Enjoyn'd Silence to both Parties; for theſe are Speculations ſo little certain, and ſo little eſſential to Religion, that a diverſity of Opinions ought not to be made the occaſion of Debate and Faction. But ſome Divines in *Switzerland* adhering to the old receiv'd Doctrins, drew up ſome Articles, in which the Opinions of their Opponents were not only Condemn'd, but made thoſe their Articles not only the Standard, againſt which no Man, without being Cenſur'd, might have Taught, but they oblig'd all that ſhould be admitted into the Miniſtry or Profeſſor's Chair, to Sign *Sic Sentio*; which they Setled, not only at *Bern* and *Zurich*, but by their Authority was carry'd to *Geneva*. Thus

Thus they were not contented to make only a Regulation in those Matters, but they would needs, according to a Maxim that hath been so often fatal to the Church, enter into Peoples Consciences, and either shut out young Men from Employments, or impose a Test upon them, which perhaps some have Sign'd not without struglings in their Consciences. The Author renders those that set on Tests, to be Persons of extraordinary Worth, and that he believes in it they acted out of a sincere Zeal, but wishes they had larger and freer Souls.

Thus we see, that in point of Prudence all Churches do and must admit Dissenters, and are not in it Censur'd as doing of Evil.

In Fence against such an Imputation, let us apply our selves to the proper Measures of Good and Evil, which certainly must be taken from the Example and Precepts of our Blessed Saviour.

1. His Example in the Case between his Disciples and the *Luc.* 9. 55. *Samaritans.* They upon that Feud that was between them and the Jews, would not receive our Saviour, *because his Face was as tho' he would go to Jerusalem.* Upon this their unworthy refusal of their Lord, the Disciples mov'd *that Fire might be call'd from Heaven, to consume them, as Elias did. But Jesus turn'd to them, and rebuked them, saying, Ye know not what manner of spirits ye are of.* A true Christian Spirit, such as becomes a Disciple of Christ, is full of Meekness, Charity, Condescention, and Tenderness. He farther tells them, That *he did not come to destroy mens Lives, but to save.* A fiery, persecuting, and destroying Temper, is forein to the Temper of Christ and Christianity.

2. As to the Precepts of Christ and Rules of Christianity, *Id agit totum Evangelium*, it is the great Design of the Gospel to recommend Love, Charity, and Meekness, to make the Professors of it Pure and Peaceable. *Have Salt in your selves, and Peace one with another. This is my Commandment, that ye love one another.* 'Tis the Characteristical Note of his Disciples, *By this shall all Men know that ye love one another.* And the Apostles upon all occasions press this Temper; *Follow after Peace and Holiness, without which no Man shall see God.*

God. Hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace. Follow after the things that make for Peace, and wherewith ye may edifie one another. This is preferr'd to Sacrifice and Burnt-offering. *Gal.* 13. 14. We are commanded to *Serve one another in love. For all the Law is fulfill'd in this one word, You ſhall love your Neighbor as your ſelf; but if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not deſtroyed one of another.* That if we (as we ought) do take our Meaſures, from the holy Example and Divine Precepts of our Bleſſed Saviour, they will be found under great Miſtake, that aſſume and uſurp to themſelves the beſt Name, and moſt zealous of Chriſtians, that are Strangers to theſe Vertues of Meekneſs, Peaceableneſs, and Univerſal Charity, that conſtitute a Chriſtian Temper; they will appear miſerable Perverters of the Chriſtian Religion, by making that to be the fatal Incendiary of Hatred and Contention, which was deſign'd the moſt inviolable Band of Unity and Peace; and in rendring that the Inſtrument to Confound and Embroil the World, which is deſign'd the moſt proper Oeconomy to Regulate and Calm it. Such, amidſt their Pretences to a ſingular Eminency in Chriſtianity, will appear unworthy the Name of Chriſtian, that account thoſe Graces of Love, Meekneſs, and Charity, as dull Earthy and Phlegmatick Qualities, who are altogether for the Fire and Cloven Tongues, but diſclaim the Spirit as deſcending in the Shape of a Dove.

'Tis evident, that the greateſt part of that Law which denominates Men truly Chriſtians, is made up of Precepts of Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering, and Condeſcenſion; therefore that Zeal muſt be prepoſterous, that pretends to obey the Goſpel in violating its Rules. 'Tis this that hath brought our Religion into that unhappy State in which it lies; that that Zeal which ſhould be its Life, is become its Diſeaſe, and like a Hectic Body, is conſuming its ſelf by its Feveriſh Heats. Whereas if Men would ſoberly weigh how their Temper and Deportment agrees with the Rules of Chriſtianity, and would not too confidently purſue every incitation that carries a ſhew of Piety, they would find that their angry and paſſionate Heats are not that true Chriſtian Zeal that ought to be cheriſh'd, but would be convinc'd, that its venerable Name is too oft miſapply'd to things of a diverſe, ſometimes of a

contrary

contrary nature; That Meekneſs and Charity are no Lukewarmneſs, that we may be Peaceable and Zealous too. Let us, who glory in the Name of Chriſtian, ſeriouſly conſider our great Obligations to Love and mutual Condeſcenſion, to live as Brethren amicably together. We are Children of the ſame Father, Members of that one Body whereof Chriſt is the Head, Heirs of the ſame Grace; We have one Faith, one Baptiſm, one Mediator; The God whom we Serve is the God of Peace, Chriſt our Head is the Prince of Peace, the Goſpel we profeſs is the Goſpel of Peace: Oh that therefore this Brotherly Peace and Amity might obtain its due Place and Regency in our Hearts and Lives, that all Anger and Animoſity may ſurceaſe; that we may no longer bite and devour one another, but ſerve one another in Love; which if it were not to be deſpair'd (at this Juncture, when His Gracious Majeſty vouchſafes to receive all His peaceable Subjects under his Royal Wing, and imparts his Graces and Favors without diſtinction,) that all invidious and diſtinctive Titles may be abandon'd and exploded the World, that the Divine Name of Chriſtian deſcribe all the Members of the Body of Chriſt, as once it did at *Antioch*, Acts 11. 26. and that all that are Baptis'd into that Sacred Name, may be recover'd into that Love and Amity which obtain'd in the Primitive State of Chriſtianity; then the Church was edifi'd, and there were daily added to it ſuch as were appointed to Salvation. This would make the Church like *Jeruſalem*, built on a City that is compact within it ſelf; it would be adorn'd with Beauty to allure Strangers, and endu'd with Strength to confound its Enemies: Our living thus together would ſecure us in the Preſence and Benediction of the God of Love and Peace, which ought to be the Prayer of all good Men, and is the ardent Deſire, and ſincere Endeavor of

SIR,

REMARKES
UPON A
PAMPHLET
Stiled, A Letter to a
Dissenter, &c.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

In another Letter *to the same* Dissenter.

SIR,

AN highly applauded *Pamphlet* fell into my hand, at that instant when I was sealing my last Letter to you, relating to the *Penal Laws and Tests*, I then purposed to tell you my thoughts thereof in a Postscript, but being diverted till the Post was gone, and yours of the 8th Instant mentioning the thing, this comes to tell you, that I have slightly run it over, and do perceive the *Wordy Author* designs thereby to allure the *Dissenters* to a Contempt and Rejection of the *Kings* benigne Purpose to them. Its Title, and another Circumstance, *your early notice of it*, inclines me to conclude that it was wrote to you; whether so or not; I shall briefly Remarque upon it. The *great Man* sets out floridly; As a *Modish* Person, he accosts the poor *Dissenter* by way of *Address*. The Courtship seems to me sudden and surprizing, and I suspect the Design, for I take it to be something *Judas-like*, for one of the *Epistlers Figure* and *Spirit*, to approach a *Mechanick*, and a *Schismatick* to boot, in the humble way of *Hat and Knee*.

But he doubts not of kind reception, provided that his

Diſſenter will take his Word, when he affirms, that he is neither *a Coward, nor a deſigning or freetfull Man.* I wiſh he had put his Name to his Letter, becauſe ſome will have it, that the *Author* is a Perſon ſo tranſcendently *Haughty* and *Ambitious*, that he little regards what, or whom he Sacrifices, may he but become *head of a party.* But,

If he gains not the Point, by the glorious *Character* which he aſcribes to himſelf, his *reaſons* muſt undoubtedly (as he conceits) win him the Day; his *friendſhip* commanding you to allow them to paſs Muſter, for he pledges his Word, that *the time of day*, diſpoſes him to *Charity*, therefore in this nick of time, you are neither to call into Queſtion his Wiſdom, Honeſty, or Affection; *a moſt lucky period.*

In confidence that I have at leaſt an equal title to your *Friendſhip*, his being but newly contracted, and ours what Storms hath tryed; I ſhall, in my old plain-dealing way with you, obſerve, that the *Gentlemans* ſtock both of *Charity and Truth* is very ſuddenly exhauſted, for he inſtantly charges to his *Diſſenters account* both the *Excluſion and Rebellion:* Were the Fact ſo, and the Brat laid at the right Door; Why ſhould this high *Pretender to Loyalty*, check in any *Delinquent*, a graetſul Reſentment of his Majeſties *Forgiveneſs?* But,

Should the *Fanatick* (to avoid wrangling with the *Church of England*) agree to make an equal Partition with her, of the mentioned Crimes, and their deſerved ſhame? The half would far exceed his due ſhare: Then will it be conſiſtent, with *her breeding, and ſuperlative Vertue*, to yeild *him* the honour of all the *Repentance and Confeſſion.*

In the next place your *Friend craves audience*, and paſſing the Complement, that he yet *hopes you in your Wits, he bids you be ware of New Friends* (a very pertinent caution, your Friendſhip with him being yet in the bloſſom) and

He beſpeakes you to be a *prudent Chriſtian*, and not to *hazard the publick Safety, by the deſire of Eaſe or Revenge.* Good again.

To

To enforce the firſt *(viz.)* that you are to *ſuſpect new Friends*, he inſinuates, that you are not to be carried over, *by ſmooth Language now put on to engage you*, by the way, the expreſſion intending to inſinuate *a cheating Deſign*, had been as well *worded* (Words (with abundance of ſpite) being mainly what fills the Paper now before me) had it ſaid, putting off of ſmooth Language, or making what is Gilded over, to paſs as Current Coyn; but whether off or on be beſt, in this place; in the next, the *Gentleman* doffing his Clothes, perſonates an enraged ſlighted *Miſtreſs* (or *Rival*) and tells you, that *ſhe* (for to follow our Amorous Author, we muſt for a time change the Sex) had the *the firſt offer*, and you have only the coy Ladies leavings. It is then evident (and ſhall be anon further made out) that *ſhe held a parly with your new Lover*, ay, but if you will credit her, ſhe ſaw his *Deformity*, and therefore *rejected* him. I doubt you will get little by enquiring of the *Squeamiſh Dame*, whether punctillios of Honour, hopes of higher Terms, or the Devils Pride and Envy, did not occaſion her raſh refuſal, and whether ſhe doth not too late repent it? for Queſtions of this kind do rarely receive direct and honeſt Anſwers. I ſhall therefore according to my wonted freedom, exhort you to *ſtand upon your Guard*, that ſhe may not play you a trick, and then reproach you. He now (for the Aggreſſor in Love, muſt be concluded to wear Breeches) *makes court to you*, examine carefully, I beſeech you, whether you are *his Choice*, *and not his Refuge*, if the laſt, it will be your wiſdom to make ſure terms with him, and allowing the *Gentleman* to mean as he would be taken, you have his own advice, that *you are not to yeild over haſtily to new Friends*, upon their beſpeaking you fairly. He tells you, that *you cannot reaſonably flatter your ſelf that there is* (with your Lover) *any inclination to you*: I incline to think as he doth, if he takes it, that beding together is to be the next thing in the caſe, (then 'tis probable that no Love is loſt) but I have

 heard,

heard, that a Perſon diſappointed in his firſt Amour, is ever after cold, and indifferent, in Affection; and therefore ſince *the Church of England* affirms, that ſhe *refuſed to ſtrike up a Bargain*, I will believe, that *a chaſt Diſſenter*, may live in the ſame Kingdom, with the *Romaniſt*, without the hazard of a *Rape*.

They (the Papiſts, ſaith the Letter), *never pretended to allow you any Quarter, but to uſher in Liberty to themſelves, under that ſhelter.* Well then, you are out of danger of being *put to the Sword*, you may have *Quarter*, a Grace refuſed you by *the Church of England*. Ay, may you ſay, but what are the terms? why, ſuch as are very equall, and highly reaſonable, both Parties have been long and ſorely galled by the *Canon of the Church of England*. The *Papiſts* will now help to *diſmount them*, and they call for your aid; I pray what harm in all this, and why ſo much noiſe againſt it?

And it proceeds; *Nay, at this very hour they can hardly forbear in the height of their Courtſhip, to let fall hard words of you, ſo little is nature to be reſtrained.* The Gentleman may well ſay,

Pudet hæc opprobria nobis,
Et dici potuiſſe, & non potuiſſe refelli.

You and I do know, *at this very hour*, and ſo doth he, the names of *dignified Sons of the Church of* England, *who declare, that the Devil will have both Papiſt and Diſſenter.* This I'm ſure is none of the ſofteſt Language.

But you are told in the next Paragraph, *That Liberty and Infallibility are the two moſt contrary things in the World.* I affirm, that it is beyond contradiction true, that our *errable Church of England* has run to the Arguments of that Church, which claims *Infallibility*; to juſtifie her ſelf, in her attempts, to extirpate Diſſenters; and (*right or wrong*) they had been Ruined, had not the preſent *Kings* Clemency reſcued them.

But

But *the Principles of the Roman Church allow not Liberty to Hereticks.* Nor do thoſe of *the Engliſh Church to Schiſmaticks*; ſuch ſhe eſteems her *Diſſenters*, and as ſuch, ſhe (when in Power) conſtantly treats, and labours to deſtroy them.

If ſo, the argument of *preſent hugging, in order to the better ſqueezing hereafter*, vaniſhes; and *the ſeting up Bills, and offering Plaiſters for tender Conſcienses*; may deſerve as great regard from *the Romiſh*, as from *the Lambeth Church*, and in our preſent conjuncture much more.

The Gentleman goes on to tell you. *The other day you were Sons of Belial, now you are Angels of Light.* And he aſſerts, *that to come ſo quick, from one extream to another, is ſuch unnatural a motion*, that you are to look to your ſelf. Pray do ſo, and in doing it, remember, that *in the word of a King there is Power*; and that *the Church of England*, which now hath none, to hurt or ſave (*till* her preſent exigence extorted a Complement) ſtiled you *a Child of Darkneſs.*

In the next place *the Men of Taunton and Tiverton* (for ſound or Jingle ſake, no doubt) are hook'd in, and their *Loyalty* ridiculed: notwithſtanding in this our *Church-Mans* opinion, that renders them vile, it would not offend a good Subject, to ſee others imitate them, and tho *H.* (at this day) *non eſt litera*; methinks *Hull* and *Halliſax* o a Northern-man, ſhould chime every whit as well as *T.* and *T.* of the *Weſt*; wherefore, pray prevail with your new Friend (who will not break with you in trifles) to write a ſecond Letter Northward, and if your Intrigue with him continues till the return of the general Poſt, (*for we are admoniſhed to have a very tender regard to Horſes*) I doubt not but he will be obliged to tell you that the worthy Inhabitants of thoſe Places, have the courage to *vye Loyalty* with any of his Majeſties Subjects. If I miſtake them, *Libera me.*

Now our *Valiant* author (*the Weſt being vanquiſhed*) points *Southward*, and picks a Quarrel with the *poor Quakers.* This

may

may well surprise you, I'm sure it did me at first sight; for you and I believe they will not draw the *Sword*, much less encounter a *Goliah*; therefore you may say, certainly no fear of them to *a fearless Man*; ay, but the *Gentleman* now handling them, resolves to spoil an *English Proverb*, and to his *courage* would monopolize *Wit*, and the *Quaker* he says has learn'd to speak *sence*, and which is worse, he becomes *mannerly*, to such a degree, that this your new Friend (*who grumbles for a place at Court*) begins to suspect himself in some danger of being post-posed; for the *Quaker* having given the King *decent thanks* for his *Protection*, may, for ought he knows, become *Courtier*. (*Sir*) you are now to believe the Gentleman has spit his Poyson, for he tells you, that *no sharpness is to be mingled where healing only is intended*; and he promises hereafter *to say nothing to expose particular Men, how strong soever the temptation may be, or how clear the proofs to make it out*; he might as well have said, Now *Gentlemen Dissenters* look to your hits, we have been *Complicens*, provoke me not to detect our *Rogueries*; *please me or all shall out*, (but begging his Pardon) he shall speak for himself, and see what follows; 'tis in friendship this; *for Arguments sake*, and to promote the proposed *healing*, the honest well-meaning Man, (*not willing to tell tales*) bearly whispers you, *poor deluded Dissenter*, in the Ear; that to his knowledg there is Death in the Pot, *your Minister is a Knave, you are Sold, the Money is Paid, and you are most certainly Betrayed.*

Is not this said like a *Church of England Worthy, not tied or confined to this or that subdivision of Protestants*, like one estranged from *sharpness*, and who affects and intends *healing*? Can Hell it self furnish a more inveterate and malicious Insinuation?

We remember the time, when some Men talk'd of *Pensioners in Parliament*; they obliged the World with *a List* of those who were reputed such, and if I mistake not, with the Name

of

of him, who they ſaid, *hired and paid them.*

The *Diſſenter* now addreſſed to, for his own ſafety, ought to challeng this his *new Suiter*, for the Names of ſuch *Miniſters* as have made *the bargain and ſale* ſuggeſted, and methinks his *Charity, and the warmth of his Affection*, ſhould diſpoſe him to gratifie ſuch a modeſt and neceſſary Requeſt; if it be refuſed I muſt conclude my Friend *ſo far gone in his Paſſion*, that he has wholly loſt his Underſtanding, ſhould this *Gentlemans Courtſhip* any longer *impreſs, or influence him.*

Now our *Author* falls with down right Blows upon the *Addreſſers*, and beſtows bitter *Invectives* upon them, and upon the *Government* to boot; that part of his *Libel* deſerves and probably will be reckoned for in *Weſtminſter Hall*, therefore I ſhall ſhun the danger of becoming his *Acceſſary* by tranſcribing him.

Then he betakes himſelf to *Flattery*, and tells you, that *if you had to do with thoſe riged Prelates who made it a matter of Conſcience to give you the leaſt Indulgence, but kept you at an uncharitable diſtance, and even to your more reaſonable ſcruples continued ſtiffe and inexorable, the argument might be fairer on your ſide.*

I conclude then, that *your Argument* to accept of *Liberty* from the King, is no way *enervated*: Is here any ſort of proof, that *Prelacy* has changed its thoughts, and put on tenderneſs to you; you may not truſt this *undertaker* in a thing ſo valuable as is that, now diſcuſſed, *the Church of England* cannot intend well, or uſe you ſo, *(without incurring the guilt of Perjury as I have heard her ſay)* till ſhe gives up her *Laws of force*, and you ſee that her *Zeal* to uphold them occaſions this *great conceſſion in the Kingdom*, wherefore, I doubt ſhe is not right; and your only ſure way of dealing with her, ſeems to me to be, to *diſarm her* by Act of *Parliament*, of every Weapon which the *Goſpel* did not put into her hand, then I'm ſure *She* can do no Miſchief.

Reverend Mr *Baxter's* expectation was raiſed about twenty ſix

ſix years ſince, by the ſame pretence, as now yours is to be, but after the then *Prelacy (which I am confident the preſent will not diſown)* had long *triſſled* with him and his worthy *Brethren, about healing*, in the *Savoy Conferences*; they found themſelves *diſappointed and ſhamd*: If the *Church* be as skilful in *Chirurgery* as our Author would perſwade, ſhe was the more to blame to hold the *Patient* ſo long in hand, as then ſhe did, and in fine to leave or make the *Wound* worſe then ſhe found it. (*honeſty I do find is abſolutely neceſſary to a good Chirurgion*) The ſame *Spirit* ſtill lives in our *Church-Men*, or it may in time to come return again, and poſſeſs them; you have then no other way to *conjure* down the *evil Spirit of Perſecution*, but by a Repeal of the *Penal Laws*, that only can aſſure you, that *a rigid Prelacy* ſhall not hereafter *deſtroy you*; and you have reaſon to take the Alarum at your Woers next harangue, (*Neſcit nox miſſa reverti*) *She or He* (no matter which) *has enchantment in her Face, and can inſtantly put your Noſe out of joynt with your new Friend, may look you Dead*; for you are told, that *at this very hour and in the heat and glare of your preſent Sun-ſhine, the Church of England can in a moment bring Clouds again, and turn the royal Thunder upon your Heads, blow you off the Stage with a breath; if ſhe would give but a ſmile or a kind word, the leaſt glimpſe of her compliance would throw you back into the ſtate of Suffering and draw upon you all the arrears of Severity which have accrued during the time of this kindneſs to you.*

This is in truth (*my good Friend*) plain dealing, look to your ſelf therefore, and make your peace with her, or you periſh, (*if you believe her*) for *Clouds, Thunder and Tempeſts* await, (*and as ſhe ſaith*) are at her command; *She* can at pleaſure take you into her Power, add to your Yoke, and chaſtice you with *Scorpions*, and that's not all; *She* can bring you to an *After-Reckoning*, laſh you for playing *Truant*, and exact what you have run *in Arrear (this laſt diſcovery will undoubtedly procure the Gentleman an Addreſs of Thanks from* Doctors Commons, *for the City Diſſenters*

Dissenters are near two years Rent run, there) Nay, and to compleat your misery *(after all the Reckonings paid)* She can by her Excommunication, throw you, *with a quick hand* to Satan.

You may demand, what shall *poor I* do in this my great Strait? *Why*, as you love your Life keep out of her *Clutches*, *defy her*, and attone our English *Jupiter*, That he may not entrust his *Thunderbolts* in this mad Hand.

Be true, *I beseech you*, to your Interest, and deport your self so to the *King*, that your *new conciliated Friendship*, which she upbraids, and envies, may not be endangered.

I shall now give you a Reason or two, why you may justly suspect this *Gentleman*, now making Love to you in the Name of the *Church*. I find his Letter stuffed with *malitious and false Insinuations* against dissenting Ministers (amongst whom I never found a Knave) I will therefore hope that my telling *you* Truth, tho' to his Disparagement, will not be taken as a Breach of the Rules of good Manners.

If the *Church of England's Commissioners* in the present Treaty with you, have been tampering with those of the *Roman Communion*, and offering Terms for the Life of their dearly beloved *Penal Laws*: If they, to come a little closer, have proposed, That if the *Roman Catholicks* will not joyn with you, for the Repeal of those *Laws*, they shall be secured against any imaginary Danger from the *Test-Penalties*, in a succeeding *Reign*, by a *Mortgage* of the *Honours* and *Estates* also, of som *great Men* driving that Bargain. I say, should this be true, there's certainly Mischief in her Heart, and she will reveng your runing her into this *Incumbrance*, by *teaching you* hereafter, (as *Gideon* did the Men of *Succoth*) with *Briers and Thorns*.

If *She* hath her *Ambassadors at this very Hour*, treating an *Alliance* with the *Papists*, and proposing to yield them Liberty by *Act of Parliament*, with Exception of the *Fanatick*.

If these, or any others, should at this time, *prate and buz*

Fears and Jealousies in your Ears, you are obliged to be deaf, upon pain of all the Mischief they intend you. The Church seems to t e n ble the bloody *Tyrant*, and seeing her Power reduced, she would be content for a time, to turn *Pedagogue*, and *whip Boys*, to keep her Hand in ure.

The Church *Plenipotentiary*, towards the close of his Letter, *points his Wrath* towards the *King and his Government*; And with *you*, he seems to descend to *calm* (but very *wickedly* intended), *Reasoning*. *It is with Regret that he beholds you disposed to quarrel the Church of* England *now she is upon the Brink of Suffering*; *'Tis very unkind in you, for she never persecuted the Dissenters, but by Direction, and as she was set on*: A bad Excuse, you know, is better than none. The *Gentleman* further insinuates (*and you are to believe him if you will*) That the taking away the *Penal Laws and Tests* (*the Base of Religion, and of Liberty*) will put you under a Tyranny, and absolutely destroy you. In truth (*Sir*) were I in the *East Indies*, the sight of this lamentable Complaint would greatly move me, for I should doubt the Case of the *Church of England* to be very deplorable, but 'tis a great *Blessing* that all this is *Misrepresentation*, and *foul Slander*. The *King's* Promise secures her of *Peace and Plenty*, and that *Act of Parliament* which shall secure you out of her *Paws*, may give her further *Security* if she wants it. This her *grim faced Representative*, seems to take his short and angry *Turns*, like the *Tower-Lyon*, and ever and anon *roares*; but 'tis not want, but a ravenous Appetite to *rend and tear*, that occasions all this *Wrath and Rage*: Nature will be Nature. Therefore you may tell the Church in your Excuse (for a reason of your Doings ought something to appease her toward you) in the language of the *Lepers*: (My *Distress* is great.) *If I still sit here, I dye, if the* Syrians *save me alive, I shall live; if they kill me I shall but dye.*

To *cokes* and work you off, from getting *Liberty of Conscience*,

science, from the only Hand which can dispense it: You are told that *some of the Church of* England *were Trimmers for enduring you, and the Maxim was, It is impossible for a Dissenter, not to be a Rebel.*

This *Gentleman* certainly thinks that you have forgot, who gave those *moderate Men* that Name of Reproach, therefore you may tell him, That to your Knowledg the *Church* esteemed them but *spurious Sons*, and could not endure them, because they gave you a good Look; you need not go to *Gloucester* to make this out; but if you should let me engage you to take *Salisbury* in your way, and enquire there, how the Church treated a *Protestant Reconciler*. If you do so, pray use your Interest with her, and try whether in this *height of her Caresses, she* will demonstrate the sincerity of her Affection to you, by recomending it to that *Doctor* to *recant* his *Recantation*.

As to the *Maxim* cited, *It is impossible for a Dissenter not to be a Rebel.* I am certain it was delivered from a Pulpit, nearer to *Ludgate* then that of *Limestreet*.

So much for the *Gentleman's angry and whedling* part; Now I bring you to his *Politicks:* and the *Dissenters* are meer *Fools*, if they trust not to his most wise *Conduct*, for he saith *you* (silly soul) *act very unskilfully against your visible Interest*; this were to purpose indeed, if made out, but the Mischief of it is, the powerful *Argument of Interest* turns against him; The *Dissenters Liberty* may now be certainly *established*, but, saith the *Church*, I see my *halcyon Days* at hand, put on a little Patience, and then *you and I will treat about the Matter*. Were you in the Extremity of the *Stone*, and sure of receiving present Ease by an *infallible Chirurgion*, your next *Neighbour*, who tells you his *Price*, and ever *made good his Word*; how would you entertain that *Friend's Counsel*, who should say, let me advise you to wait a little, for I hear that *Germans* excell all others in this Case, and about Six Months hence I may bring you one from *Vienna* to try his *Skill*: But to be plain with you, when he comes, *he*

will

will leave you as he finds you, if you break with him for *Terms*; but I do think he will not be *unreasonable*, for he hath a very good *Character*: I know you have an Answer at Hand, therefore (without leading you) I pray transmit it to this your Counsellor.

A Word or two more, and I have done; He passes his Word, That *the Church of* England *is convinced of its Error, in being Severe to you.* I know not how this will pass with you, but being too much a *Stranger* to this *Author*, and to the nature of his *Commission*, I should be glad to see *her* put out her own *Declaration of Repentance*; for should this *Person* have *Authority* to speak for her (*tho of old, true Penitents spoke for themselves*) *he* doth it so *ukwardly* in this Paper; that, to be plain, I suspect 'tis *insincere*; for he *contends*, and that with the height of Passion, to uphold her *Penal Laws*, and I have no other Quarrel with her, but about *Thunderbolts*.

He proceeds, *The Parliament, when ever it meeteth, is sure to be gentle to you*: 'tis the first thing we agree in, and it grieves me that we could not hit upon it sooner; *I do* hope and *believe*, he is at length in the right, but that I may not be cheated; if you find him in good humor, when you see him; let him know from me, (*with my service*) that my *suffrage* shall never help *him*, or any of his *Spirit* and *Principle* into the House of *Commons*; He admonishes you not to *misapply your anger*, allow another Friend to exhort you, not to *misplace* your *Voice*, when the King shall please to call a *Parliament*, and you will oblige your self and me.

Septemb. 10 1687.

Adieu,

Yours Affectionately,

T. W.

FINIS.